

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
PAYSON - ILLINOIS

HABS. NO. ILL - 26

HABS
ILL.
1. PAYSON

Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
DISTRICT NO. ILL-2

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
• EDGAR E. LUNDEEN • DISTRICT OFFICER •
CORN BELT BANK BUILDING • BLOOMINGTON, ILL.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Payson, Adams County, Illinois

Owner. Congregation of Payson, Illinois.

Date of Erection. 1865.

Architect. Unknown.

Builder. Unknown.

Present Condition. The church is in a good state of preservation and stands as it was originally built, with the exception of a wing on the south. This later addition is used for a classroom on the main floor level, and for the present kitchen in the basement. The building shows very little signs of decay.

Number of Stories. One, and basement.

Materials of Construction. The entire structure is of wood, with the exception of the foundation and basement walls. These are of native limestone, approximately twenty inches in thickness. The studding is 2" x 8" oak, and the joists are 2" x 12" oak, 18 inches on centers, and supported by a brick masonry wall in the basement. The rafters are of oak, 2" x 5", and are 2'-0" on centers.

The roof and spire are supported by heavy oak timber trusses in skeleton form. These consist of 8" x 8" timbers braced by 8" x 10" oak uprights, and resting on 8" x 12" oak beams. All joints are mortised and tenoned and held in place by oak pins. The roof was originally wood shingles, but has been removed, and at present is asphalt shingles. The exterior

of the main building is covered by clapboards, five inches to the weather. The interior is plaster, with pine trim and flooring.

The cupola is constructed of heavy 8" x 8" oak timbers, resting on 11" x 9" oak beams, and covered on the exterior by 1" x 6" horizontal boards. The spire is octagonal framed with 6" x 7" oak timbers, 3'-0" on centers, joined at the base by a 6" x 8" beam. All framing in the spire is held in place by steel bolts. The exterior of the spire is covered with siding three inches to the weather.

Other Existing Records. None.

Additional Data. The Congregational Church at Payson, Illinois, remains today very much as it was when erected. In 1863, through the leadership of deacon Albigen Scarborough, steps were taken to build this simple, inspiring house of worship, plain but soundly constructed.

The church is situated on the crest of the knoll on which the village of Payson is located. The majestic spire rises to a height of one hundred six feet from the ground to the weathervane. This spire is visible for many miles on clear days as the sun, shining on the white sides of the octagonal, brings it out in bold relief. The construction of the spire is of a crude but interesting design. The principle used consists of a riding or floating beam in the center that extends perpendicular the entire length of the spire. Into this beam, at various intervals, the heavy oak timbers of the octagon are tied. Standing exactly as originally built, it has proven itself to be practically windproof,

and is a beloved landmark to the community it serves.

I. Payso

Reference: "History of Adams County, Illinois" at the
Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield,
Illinois.

Loren Van Dyke
Author

(Approved) Walter E. Lundem
District Officer

3/11/57 TRV